1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

The Mountains

133 The legend of the rainbow in the rock does not err in speaking of Greece
[311] as a rock. Only one fourth of her area is currently or potentially of any agricultural use and lies mostly in valleys or plains near the coast, at the foot of mountainous slopes. The remaining three fourths of the land consists largely of precipitous mountains, ranging up to a height in Mount Olympus of about 9600 feet.[11] "Beautiful," says the tourist. "Unproductive," says the economic planner.

The Pindus range, reaching its way south as an extension of the Dinaric Alps from Yugoslavia, is most marked in Epirus but nevertheless extends on into Central Greece. A spine of mountains comprises the central part of the Peloponnesos; even Athens is surrounded by gentle Parnes, Hymettus, and Pentele. In Northern Greece the Rhodope Massive cuts through part of Macedonia and Thrace, while Mount Olympus rises majestically out of the Thessalian plain. This means that the rugged topography is not confined to one part of Greece but that peaks can be seen from almost any place on the mainland. Many islands, including Euboea and Crete, have their heights around which legends as well as clouds have gathered.

[137] Since there are no forests on many of the mountains, the landscape has an almost naked look when seen for the first time. But a longer stay in Greece accustoms one to the browns and grays and lavenders in place of the greens often associated with tree-clad mountains. Frequently at dusk the mountains turn to a deep rose and purple that seems magically unreal.

[132] Where there are mountains there should be water to irrigate the fields below or turn the turbines of power projects. Heavy rains and snows do fall on the summits, but since Greece is only 171 miles across at its widest part (Epirus-Thessaly), and since the mountain divide cleaves the center, there is not much space in which rivers can find a gradual slope to the sea. They thus are short and swift, with a torrential character that poses great problems of flood, silt, erosion, and river control.

134 A village priest in Epirus described the erosion of soil by saying, half-seriously, that his fields grew rocks. When asked how this could be, he replied, "I went out and plowed my field, plowing around two rocks that stood only slightly above the ground. I put in my seed; the rains came. After the first rain I noticed that the rocks had grown farther above the soil; after the second rain they had grown even more. So I knew that my fields grew rocks rather than grain."

137 Where there are mountains there should be forests. But before the war
185 Greek forests covered only about 19 percent of the total area of the country. Once they were larger in extent. Constantine Nevros, in an article
[311] in *Soil Conservation,* holds the goat primarily responsible for the destruc-
[233]
[175]

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

tion of the forests, but points out that even in classical times portions of Greek forests were felled to provide lumber for the construction of Athenian triremes.[12] He dates the beginning of the serious destruction of Greek forests during the Roman invasion of Macedonia, when the Greeks lost their fields in the fertile plains and took refuge in the mountains where they were forced to become stock breeders. Other writers fix the most serious destruction at the time of the Greek war of independence, beginning in 1821, when large tracts of forest were burned. This form of devastation has continued ever since, either to clear land for cultivation or to encourage the growth of young palatable shoots which are attractive to stock. An example of what warfare can do is the cutting down of the trees on Mount Parnes, near Athens, and other places during World War II by the Germans pursuing guerrillas and by Athenians in need of fuel.

The remaining land area of Greece which is not arable and not in forest, certainly over 50 percent, is either in scrub oak or is open rocky range, a fact which makes sheep and goat raising an important branch of the economy.

Where there are mountains there should be useful minerals. Greece does have a variety of mineral deposits, including some iron ore of high content, iron pyrites, emery, copper, zinc, lead magnesite, chromite, and lignite. An American company is now exploiting a fairly large deposit of asbestos south of Kozane. There is no coal, but much more extensive use could be made of the "brown coal," or lignite, to reduce or eliminate the heavy import of coal. Even if the resources listed here, as well as others not touched upon, were fully utilized, Greece would still compare unfavorably with most other countries.

These barren, colorful mountains modify the climate.[13] We often tend to think of Greece as having a Mediterranean climate, mindful of its similarity to Florida or California. Actually, what is called a Mediterranean climate — a hot, dry, cloudless summer, frequent north winds, and a mild, rainy, cloudy winter — prevails over only a small portion of Greece, such as the eastern coast of the Peloponnesos, Central Greece and Euboea, Crete and the Aegean Islands. The map of rainfall shows this clearly. On the western side of the Peloponnesos there is a modified Mediterranean climate with much heavier rainfall. Much of Greece, however, has a modified Continental climate with cold winters and hot, usually dry, summers. These conditions of extreme alternations in Thessaly, Central and Eastern Macedonia, and Thrace favor the growing of cereals. The dry areas of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, with soils low in humus, are centers for the growing of the small-leaved Oriental or Turkish tobacco.

What is surprising is the prevalence of an Alpine climate, due to the high altitudes, throughout the Pindus area and the higher parts of the

1:Sanders Z-5,N (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

823 Despite many difficulties, the rural Greeks continue to like the summits
361 about them, and they settle down in bleak and stony areas with a contentment hard for the outsider to understand. At a point between Lamia and Karpenesi near Tymphrestos Mountain, we passed a peasant woman who was driving a donkey loaded with alfalfa to her village.

"This is a nice place here, isn't it?" we said, to get a conversation started.

"Yes, it's nicely situated."

"Have you got water?"

[312] "Yes, we brought it from afar [made an installation] and now we are all right. The winter is hard but we are prepared to face it. We gather our wood in advance and we sit around our fireplaces, spin, weave, eat chestnuts, while our animals are down below eating their fodder."

A few miles farther on we talked to another woman walking along the road. She remarked in the course of the conversation: "My son wanted to go to America. He went. Now, he's longing for his mountains."

To understand Greece, therefore, one must know not only the geography of her mountains, but the meaning of these mountains to the people who make them their home. The economic struggle in these highland villages
241 is told by Papaspyropoulos in his account of Kleitoria, in the Peloponnesos.
433 Notice his comparison with the lowland villages.

The villagers of my village, like all the others of that area, are farmers. Even the priest is an agriculturist, as well as the teacher, the doctor, and those who own the shops. The shepherds also are farmers; one day they go with
[233] their sheep, and the next day they go to their fields. Farming is the basis; livestock and other occupations are secondary. Systematic livestock production is only done by the shepherds of Mount Chelmos. The agricultural life in our
[312] village is very hard because the fields are few and divided into strips and the water is scarce. Each owner does not have his fields in one spot; he has one
[423] stremma [one-fourth acre] here and another further down; the one on the heights and the other in the plains, the one to the right, the other to the left. Thus in walking "they melt [wear out] their shoes." The same and even worse takes place when it is time for watering. No roads! They walk on stones here and there in the ravines, and to go back to their village after their work, tired
[487] as they are, they have to walk for an hour or more. And what sort of road! Abrupt paths and steep climbs. Neither shoes nor clothes can remain undamaged. They roam around in rags. Only on Sundays and on larger holidays can one see them in some way neatly dressed. A hard life without improvement, for the fields are few and not productive. A soft and restful life is led by the
[312] lowlanders. They have a good plain, straight road and lots of water, which is supplied by the river there. For this reason they have all kinds of fruit orchards, vegetable gardens, and other kinds of trees.

1:Sanders Z-54 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

III

The Village Setting

621 361 [369] Part of the story of Greek survival lies in the village form of organization. To be sure, the city has exercised a tremendous sway over the thought and mood of the Greek people in the past and even more so today. But a peasant's tangible world has been his village. We see the village first of all as a place with a focal point, or square, from which emanate streets, lanes, or paths winding in adjustment to the local surface features. As a place, [491] [487] the village has increasing connections with the outside world, since new roads continue to replace donkey tracks which until recently led from the more isolated areas.

But the village is also a service center where the farm family can shop or get some local artisan to make or repair household or farm equipment. In the rural areas of Greece, as elsewhere, these village services do not extend to waste disposal, this being the responsibility of the individual family. Viewed from another point, the village is a collection of houses, yards, and gardens, which also deserve a brief description if one is to see the backdrop against which so much of the peasant's daily life occurs.

621 [476] [438] [233] In the village the rural Greek has found a pattern of life which gives him the many advantages of a close-knit community and at the same time allows him to farm his land, exchange work and implements with his relatives or neighbors, sell his crops, and care for his animals in a common pasture, frequently under the care of a common swineherd or shepherd. Agricultural

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

[P 97]

[VI]

The Changing Life of the Shepherd

A year in Greece puts one on intimate terms with sheep and goats. They are everywhere. They dart across the highway before a speeding car and raise their tails in a contemptuous gesture as they leap to safety across the ditch into a field; they form a fitting part of almost every landscape one wants to photograph; and they provide the country's chief meat supply as well as the white *feta*, or soft cheese. Their wool and hides are also important sources of income to the shepherds.

There is nothing particularly glamorous about the Balkan sheep of which those in Greece are typical. They have a narrow, long tail and wool mixed with hair. C. S. Stephanides in his article, "Sheep — Man's Best Friend in Greece," writes: "The Greek sheep has a small skeleton; narrow body; short but strong legs, well-fitted for long journeys; the ability to feed on poor roughage, to withstand hardship; and early maturity." There are eleven leading breeds, seven of these being island sheep, which give much more milk, meat, and wool than the mainland sheep.[1] This is explained by the isolation of the islands, the comparative small acreage of some, and the poverty of the farmers there which forces them to keep but a few sheep and to select out the very best. The superiority of their livestock has come about through centuries of such selection. As a matter of fact, those mainlanders undertaking scientific improvement of their flocks import the island sheep for breeding purposes.

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Vlachs EH15

Although before the war Greece had over 8 million sheep and almost 4.5 million goats, these were still insufficient to meet local needs, and additional animals had to be imported each year. The war brought a reduction of about 2 million sheep and over a million goats, but by 1954 the numbers had risen to more than the prewar figures, and by 1957 sheep were estimated at 9.3 million and goats at 4.9 million.[3] From 1922 to 1937, with the resettlement of the 1.5 million refugees from Asia Minor, the pasture area in Greece decreased but the number of sheep rose from 6 million to well over 8 million. It takes little stretch of the imagination to see what this has meant in terms of overpasturing and in accentuating the competition for grazing land.

The chief concentrations of sheep and goats are found in Thessaly and through the western part of the country (Epirus, Roumele, and the Peloponnesos). Even in Attica, according to P. J. Iliopoulos, a region where numbers are not so dense, the small livestock make the best adaptation to the natural conditions; they provide the peasants with some income to offset farms that are too small or harvests that are insufficient; and they require less capital investment than do large cattle.[4]

There are three different systems of sheep management in Greece.[4] The first is that used by the so-called Vlachs, an interesting nomadic group to be discussed in detail later on. This group of grazers controls about 15 percent of the sheep. They are landless and rent grazing land from private landholders, the church, or the state. It is customary for them to graze their herds in the plains during the rainy winter months, while the lowland pastures are lush, and then drive their flocks into the mountains as spring and summer advance.

The second type of management is that practiced by the village ranchers, who control about 70 percent of the small animals. They own land in the plains, where they singly or cooperatively graze their flocks in the winter; they send them to the mountains in summer, as do the Vlachs. In some instances, farmers in this group will arrange with a Vlach to include their animals in his flock during the summer grazing in the mountains.

The third type is connected with settled agriculture. Village farmers control the remaining 15 percent of the sheep and goats and keep them on the plains at all times. Usually, the animals of these farmers are combined under the care of Greek shepherds, whose responsibility is to prevent the animals from damaging the crops by restricting their grazing to the rougher foothills or the fallow or idle areas in the plains.

The best way, however, to describe the changing life of the shepherd is not to talk about sheep and goats, but to look him up wherever he is and try to view the world through his eyes. We will do this by visiting him in the Peloponnesos and in Epirus, by which time facts and figures on sheep and goats should have much more meaning.

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

Transhumance in the Peloponnesos

We were on our way to Tripolis, the chief interior city of the Peloponnesos. Earlier we had crossed the Corinth Canal, had stopped for gas at Corinth, and gone on to Argos, perhaps the most ancient city of Greece. Oranges were ripe on the trees in the square around the cathedral, where buses pulled up to let their through passengers have a bite to eat. Turkeys and chickens tied by the leg to the top of the bus gobbled and squawked intermittently, but long ago had ceased to struggle for freedom. Leaving Argos, we had begun the long winding climb that eventually brought us to a mountain-top view of the blue Gulf of Argos and of the small port city of Nauplion across the way beneath a fortress-topped summit. As always in Greece, the shifting light gave a magic cast to the hills whose eroded sides revealed a rainbow of color, to the brown cultivated fields below, and to the brilliant iridescent water. Such landscapes, ethereal in quality, are the paths into another world, where the legendary universe of Homer seems to have flowed into the pastoral existence of Greek shepherd families today. Suddenly, that life teemed about us.

The sheep were rounding the same curve as we were, but in the opposite direction — hundreds of them pushing and shoving and terrified at the sight of a noisy, shiny automobile. We quickly pulled to the side and parked. The shepherds whistled and called, brandishing their long crooks until they finally got the huge flock of sheep and goats past us. Having encountered and met this emergency, the shepherds were ready for a cigarette and a short chat. They were from the village of Valtetsi, a few miles beyond Tripolis, up in the mountains, and were headed with their flocks and families for Kranidi, approximately twenty-five miles below Nauplion. We learned that they were following the practice geographers call *transhumance*,[6] or the moving of the herds, as the seasons change, from a summer to a winter pasture, particularly from mountain to lowland grazing. These were not nomads in an endless round of movement on schedule from one good grassland to another. These people from Valtetsi had left their village of solid stone houses, where they spend approximately half of the year, for a definite location along a coastal plain where they were to spend the other half of the year.[8]

The shepherds to whom we talked represented five families traveling together. Each family had from one hundred to one hundred fifty sheep, its major source of sustenance and income; women and children accompanied the men and animals as a whole family. The trip from Valtetsi to Kranidi took eight days of slow travel. On this trek and at its lowland site each family managed its own affairs, with the father in charge.[7] There was no cooperative arrangement of a chief shepherd which I was to find later on in a journey to Northern Greece — simply a movement of parents and

1:Sanders Z-5μ (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Peloponnesos
[Shepherds]

children, pots and pans, donkeys, and a few articles of clothing left them after destruction of their village by the Communist guerrillas several years earlier.

A later April day found us again in Tripolis. On the road we had once more been encountering flocks from Valtetsi, but this time they were headed up toward home. Fortunately, Stephanos Agriopoulos, our favorite waiter in the Reed Restaurant, had relatives in Valtetsi and was eager to take us there. We left the main highway at the new tuberculosis hospital, turning toward the mountains on our right. The road was barely passable, evidently the mere widening of a sheep track winding in and out but always up, along the edges of dry, bone dry, ravines. Now and then one of us had to get out to shove a rock from the road. En route Stephanos told us much about the people and the hard economic struggle they were facing. The road became less rocky as we neared the village. There were small fields, brilliant green, with trees along the edges. The trees stood tall around the school and church, the center of the village, where their spring freshness and sturdiness cast a sort of tender protection over the ruined stone houses that were Valtetsi. It was only after we let the people unburden themselves of their more immediate troubles, such as rebuilding their houses, that we could turn to a description of their customary semiannual migration with their flocks.

Valtetsi, with its one hundred eighty families, had not suffered under the German occupation as had so many other Greek villages. Completely off any reasonable facsimile of a road, it was not visited by the invaders; but for this very reason it was frequented by the Communist guerrillas in the 1940s as they struggled for control of Greece. The Communist leaders repeatedly tried to persuade the people to join their side, but the Valtetsi residents refused. In anger at this refusal and with the words, "if you are not for us, you are against us," the Communists descended upon the village one day and killed about one hundred people, mostly men. They burned most of the houses and took the women and children off with them. Each man to whom we talked had some personal tragedy to relate and could show us the name of some close relative or friend on the marble monument by the church erected in honor of these victims of the Communist guerrillas. As a constant reminder of that terrible day, the houses still stood in ruins — six years later. We went from house to house and found that through lack of lumber the second stories had not been built back, nor had there been tile available for the roofs. Many of the families were holed in, as it were, on the first floor, pretty much exposed to the elements during the six months of their sojourn "at home." Yet the people were friendly, glad to see us. Their mobile faces were alive. They smiled easily, were full of curiosity, and bubbled with wit. The state of dilapidation was even more noticeable when the village secretary and president, in order to give us a drink of ouzo "for the road," had to ferret out a bottle and a few

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Peloponnesos

chipped glasses from the dark basement of a roofless building which was serving as the office of the village council.

Around the Valtetsi school that morning were children curious about the strange adults, the car, and the ten-year-old American boy and the twelve-year-old English-speaking Greek boy in our party, who quickly established contact and were soon surrounded. Questions and answers about the children came naturally. When we talked to the two teachers, we began to see what migration meant to these shepherd children. The school year starts in September with everyone enrolled, but by December 1 the youngsters have all set off with their families on the seven- to ten-day tramp below. St. Demetrios' Day (October 28) is the traditional date for departure, and St. George's Day (April 23) is the date for the return. Nevertheless, school opens again on March 1. This year (1953) four pupils had been present then; a week later ten showed up; at the time of our visit business was picking up even more and before long would reach the expected 104 enrollment. Classes would continue to August 15, with only a small break before the September registration occurred.

During the winter pasturing, the children attend no school but help with the flocks as much as they can. We had often during the winter months seen these solitary shepherd children as we drove along a lowland road. As they stood motionless when our car approached, with the sheep and the goats climbing around them, their faded shapeless clothing melting into the barren hillside, they looked neither frightened nor submissive and were quick to respond to a wave or a greeting. Later on, I asked the men with whom I was talking where most of the children were born, in Valtetsi or down below. One of them replied, much to the merriment of his fellows, "They are usually born here, for it's here that the heat wave starts." One man, the proud father of nine, said that all of his had been born in Valtetsi, although each knew of occasions when a child had arrived on the roadside without the ministrations of even a midwife. We asked young and old alike in Valtetsi and elsewhere what the children thought of this semiannual change. All agreed that such a life was hard on children and that many of them dreaded the long march, but that there was no other livelihood open to their parents.

Since Valtetsi is at an altitude of 3360 feet, its hillsides are too exposed to make the pasturing of many sheep possible; in the winter months, removal to the plains below is therefore the only course of action open to the livestock owner. The families owning goats leave first, since the goats cannot stand the cold and they bear young earlier than do the sheep. Here in Valtetsi, the men pointed out, most of the pastures were communally owned and cost the people nothing; but down below each family had to contract with some peasant proprietor or commune for sufficient pasture for his flock, which now averages about 100 sheep in contrast to the 400

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Peloponnesos
[Shepherds]

233 to 500 before the war. Rent is usually paid in milk, in an amount equaling
427 the grain needed to seed the field pastured. If it takes normally 500 okas
246 of seed (23.5 bushels) to put in the crop on the area rented, then the shepherd will pay 500 okas (1410 pounds, or 169 gallons) of milk. The land available has usually been in a crop the year or two before, but is allowed to lie fallow this one year and is thus free for pasturage. Only three or four Valtetsi families have been able to buy their own land down below, but they too bring their flocks back to Valtetsi in the spring.

434 As very little farming can be done on the steep and rocky hillsides
464 around Valtetsi, many of its people, like those from Parthenon, go to the
[321] plains below in June to help harvest the grain. In the late fall and winter,
[465] while pasturing below, some of them help with the gathering of the olives. They are usually paid in kind for such work, an important way of eking out their annual food supply. Other income, of course, is derived from the sale of milk, cheese, wool, and an occasional live animal. Most of the
426 shepherds are in debt to two outside "grocers" (whom they also call
452 "outsiders" or "foreigners"), who advance the equivalent of about $33 to
578 a shepherd against the following season's milk products and agree to the
[609] retirement of the debt at a fixed price per oka of milk or cheese. The price is said to be put so low that the grocer seldom loses, but if there is a rise in price he absorbs all of the profit, further disgruntling the shepherds indebted to him. Some of the conversation went like this:

"We had a bad winter this year. The pastures were not good because it didn't rain. We had to buy fodder to carry our flocks through and thus became heavily indebted to the grocer."

"Yes," added another, "the government shouldn't let these grocers exploit us so."

[474] "But," we asked, "why don't you form a dairy cooperative like some other villages and market your own milk products yourselves?"

[157] "Oh, we could never get together on anything like that," said one, and all the others shook their heads affirmatively. And they then smiled half-ashamedly and yet amused at themselves when a city Greek pointed out to them, "Why are you then blaming the government when you have just admitted that the fault lies in your own individualism and your failure to cooperate?"

233 As a flock passed through the village on its way to be milked after a
533 morning in the fields, I began to ask about the bells, whose assorted sizes made a peculiar and not unpleasing harmony as the animals hurriedly moved homewards. Then the Valtetsi shepherds confirmed what I had been told before — that the selection of bells is one of the tasks the shepherd takes most seriously. He goes to one of the metalworking shops in the market town and picks out a very deep bell with a pleasing tone. This he

1:Sanders Z-5/4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Peloponnesos

will buy to put on his lead ram. Then he will pick another deep bell for his eldest ewe, but will always test it against the deepest bell for what seems to be harmony to his ear. As he buys the smaller bells with the higher sounds, he always compares each with the deepest bell. In a flock of about 200, he may have as many as 60 to 70 carefully tested bells. The sound of a flock grazing or in movement is always pleasing even to the casual passerby. But to the shepherd it is the sweetest music of all, for it is as though his own private orchestra were playing for him, telling him by each little sound much about the behavior of his flock. If one note is missing for very long, he becomes aware of it and investigates to see what is wrong. When all are ringing together, he feels his little universe is safe.

As I walked through the village, I tried to picture it in the cold and empty winter. Obviously, the people from Valtetsi scatter out quite widely once they get below. What kind of community can they maintain with such a migration pattern? The shepherd's answers to queries about organizational life gave a rough sketch of the Valtetsi community.

Like other villages, they have the village council. The president of the council, who happens to run a coffeehouse, must stay in the village throughout the year. He can, on occasion, get a two-week leave from the prefect in Tripolis.

"Suppose he owned livestock," I asked, "and had to take them to winter pastures below. What would he do?"

"Other members of his family would have to take care of the animals for him and he would remain here."

Local elections are postponed from winter until the return of most of the people in the spring. But for national elections the men leave the flocks with their womenfolk and older children and walk all the way back up to the village to cast their ballots.

Valtetsi also has its school board, church board, and a livestock cooperative that helps its members get some credit from the Agricultural Bank, with their flocks as collateral (it serves no marketing function). Yet the migration pattern affects even these organizations, for at the time of my visit the cooperative president had not yet returned from his winter's sojourn on the plain nor had all of the board members for the church or the school.

In spite of the periodic absence of its inhabitants, the loyalty to Valtetsi is strong. Not the least of village distinctions was the Battle of Valtetsi, in which local people claim that in 1821 the first victorious army of Greeks under Kolokotrones rose up against the Turks. Since the soldiers believed that the Virgin had aided that victory, taking part just as Hera and Athena did with their forces deployed in the Trojan War, a special church to the Virgin was built in the village in 1837. One of the most heinous

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Peloponnesos
[Shepherds]

621 crimes of the Communist guerrillas in the late 1940s, according to the
669 people, was their willful mutilation by bullets of some of the church's prized
[778] icons of the Virgin and saints.

Even when their houses are repaired and a new school is built as a result
●233 of a gift by former Valtetsi residents now in the United States, the problems
427 of the people will not be solved. Every year they find it more difficult to
241 locate grazing land for their flocks on the plains below, and they cannot
[511] get back to their prewar standard of living unless they can double or treble the number of their sheep. One complained: "The different owners down below are putting in crops on the land that used to lie fallow. They ask more money if we increase the size of our flocks. Since I had trouble with the man from whom I have been renting in the past near Kranidi, this year I went to Messenia instead. I made arrangements with a farmer to bring my flock there, paid him in advance, but when I got there with my sheep he had plowed the land promised to me and had planted potatoes. He had even plowed beneath the olive trees so that there was no grass for my sheep. I could only pasture one month there, lost the money I had paid in advance, and had to come back to Valtetsi ahead of schedule to get pasture for my flock."

233 Other shepherds in the Peloponnesos are saying the same thing. Some,
234 with whom we talked on the road from Kalamata to Megalopolis, were
511 anxious to get to their home villages in the mountains. They were carrying
[221] their milk- and cheese-making equipment with them, but their women and children had gone on ahead to get the houses ready for summer occupancy. One man complained: "I haven't been able to make ends meet although I have two hundred sheep and have sold four thousand okas of milk. The pasture didn't grow because of the dry weather and I had to buy fodder for my animals."

233 We found some of the men working with others in partnerships termed
474 *sebries*. One variety of sebria calls for a shepherd to look after and maintain the flock of another for three years. The losses and profits are equally shared. After the three-year time limit is up, each sebros (partner) takes by lot half of the common flock. If the cooperation comes to an end before the expected time limit, the division is made differently; that is, if it lasted for two years, the flock is divided into three parts and each partner takes one part; the third part is divided, two thirds to the man who owned the flock originally and one third to the shepherd. If it lasted one year, the owner receives five sixth and the shepherd one sixth of this third part. Another variation of the sebria was the pooling of animals by the owners into a flock which they jointly managed as a common flock and whose products they distributed in a proportion equal to the number of sheep contributed to the flock. This arrangement is made if the pasture land is too large for one man to manage. But even such cooperative arrangements

Vlachs EH15
1:Sanders Z-5.4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Peloponnesos
Sara Katsani EH14

G 233 474

do not go far toward meeting the basic economic issues faced by the shepherd today.

G 233 241 177 178 [291] [234]

As we talked with these shepherds, all of them dressed shabbily in patched trousers and coats and none of them in the traditional white kilt (*foustanella*), I realized again the inexorable push of social change. Americans by the hundreds in Greece were diligently and intelligently teaching Greek farmers how to improve their agricultural methods, how to make use of fallow land without losing its fertility, and even encouraging the plains farmers to keep more sheep or cows of their own for milk production. But to the degree that these sensible, reasoned programs succeed, to that extent the shepherds of the mountain villages face what we call in impersonal terms "occupational displacement."

These were my thoughts as I reflected on the experience of my acquaintances in Valtetsi and the shepherds from other Peloponnesian villages with whom I talked at many roadside stops. As background for their hesitant but sincere discussion of their problems is the recollection of the natural setting for our conversations: the brilliant bloom of wild flowers, the blue flax blossoms, the tender new green of the mulberry trees, the leaves pushing out from the gray fig trees standing in terraces on the mountainside, and the vineyards and olive groves stretching out far below, with the shimmering indigo sea off in the distance. Close at hand the earth looked stony and inhospitable to growing things, but always at a little distance the springtime colors caught the eye and made one glad to be in Greece. Now and then I found the shepherds themselves appreciatively viewing the scene around them while keeping a careful watch over their dusty, weary sheep which still had many miles ahead before reaching the succulent summer pastures. I had a feeling that these men on the move would be the first to agree that transhumance in the Peloponnesos, though beset with many problems and facing a clouded future, still had its compensations in the serene beauty of the land through which they walked.

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The "Nomads" of Epirus

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I had no idea when I left the Peloponnesos and its sheep-filled roads that a month later I would be encountering the same kind of migration in Epirus, the rugged and legendary northwestern province of Greece.

There was one important difference between the shepherds whom I met in Epirus and those in the Peloponnesos. The latter, such as the people of Valtetsi, had been bona fide Greek rancher-peasants who just happened to live in mountain villages where transhumance was their basic adaptation to their environment. In Epirus the shepherds were "nomads," who from time immemorial have made their circuits through Albania, what is now Yugoslavia, southern Bulgaria, and Northern Greece.[8] They dress differently from the Greeks; their dwellings are very different; and some of them

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece
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covered with homemade blankets. The necessary water cask was also there. 35
As we sat in front of the tent, we saw a scene of unusual beauty. The sun, 133
setting in a red splash behind the Albanian mountains, was reflected in the Aoos River flowing in a small stream through its broad gravel bed; off to our right, the town of Konitsa spread like a jeweled fan up the hill. When we stood to warm ourselves at the fire, we saw a three-quarter moon rising behind the black mountain which towered just behind the tents, the moonlight on its patches of snow. The smoke of the campfire, the dogs barking, [231] the puppies and lambs romping in the tent, the occasional neighing of the hobbled horses, made a scene that was distinct from the usual Greek evening landscape. It was incredibly different in time, too, from the atomic age, although in space only a score of miles from the Iron Curtain and twenty-eight flying hours from New York.

Berates' daughter, Vasilike, had been engaged for two years to a boy 584
whom she had never seen but who was picked out for her by her father. As the father phrased it, "the word is given." At this point in the conversation, flustered and greatly embarrassed, Vasilike went into the neighboring 272
tent to make some sirupy coffee. When we asked our host if his people had 583
a dowry system, he grunted and said: "Ten years ago women took only 177
their household equipment as a dowry; now they've started giving flocks as dowries. This accursed custom of the dowry has come up to us from the cities." Later, while we were sipping the coffee Vasilike brought, one of 533
the shepherd boys came to play his flute for us. Because this was Saturday, 515
the women two tents down the line had all washed their hair, with the exception of one little girl who was even then doing so in a small, shallow 302
oven pan. The others had gotten to the stage of having their hair plaited. We could hear them at it, laughing and talking. But as the time dragged 233
on, as darkness came down, and the sheep had not arrived, a nervousness became apparent in the camp. Everyone was marking time, waiting for the sheep.

At long last, the tension broke as we heard the flocks come nearer. They 234
arrived at 9:30, and the available men, six in all, began the milking. A barricade of saddles, firewood, and thistles had already been made in which there was a small opening. The men seated themselves, three on a side, at the opening. The sheep were driven slowly up to the opening, and as a ewe came through one of the men would grab her by the hind leg and then proceed to milk her. Here, as elsewhere in Greece, the women never milked [462] the sheep, nor the men the goats, although extra hands would have shortened considerably the tedious job that extended far into the night.

After the milking was well under way, Vasilike put a frying pan full of 262
strained milk on the fire to boil. She then brought us a bowl of this warm, [437]
rich liquid to eat with bread and cheese. The bread had been purchased along the way and was paid for by cash from the milk sold en route. While 234

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we ate, we watched the milking going on nearby. There was a rhythmic pitter-patter as the milk was squirted into the big receptacles. Each animal was named according to some physical characteristic, corresponding to "Brownie," "Dotty," "Blackie," or after some person whom the shepherd thought the sheep resembled. As the men sat there we asked them how they milked when it rained. They told us that they simply put on their heavy waterproof capes and kept right on milking.

Some of the sheep were sheared. We learned that the shearing was done below (on the plains) and sold unwashed for "it weighs more with the oil in it." The unsheared animals were simply carrying up to the summer camp the supply of wool that the women would need to use in making their blankets and heavy garments. Some of the animals were sheared in various symmetrical patterns, a style of decoration which pleases the children, so the older people said. These fancy designs are not nearly so common now as formerly, according to Berates.

Despite the magnificent mountain setting and the fascinating activities going on in the fire-lit darkness, the conversation itself — focusing on the present problems facing nomadic peoples — stands out most vividly as I look back upon this evening. Since my central interest was social change, I welcomed the turning of the talk into such a channel.

Without any doubt, the life of the nomad is getting more difficult every year. A major problem had already been brought out in many conversations along the roads of Greece as well as with the people of Valtetsi: land on the plains below is no longer so available as it used to be. Scientific agriculture is winning the day and pastoralism is on the way out. But Berates and his men were most bitter about the difficulties they faced on the road between summer and winter pastures. We had noticed the many signs represented by a pile of stones perhaps a foot high or by tufts of straw twisted onto a branch, warning the nomad not to trespass. These signs were numerous even as one approached and entered the mountain areas. That was why the men had had to drive in one day the sheep all the way from Kalpaki to Konitsa, using routes shorter than the main road but nevertheless arriving late at night. Tired from this experience, they felt such a long march to be most unfair. One man said, "Here in the mountains a peasant will sow only one oka of seed in a field so he will have an excuse to keep us out."

The field policeman, who serves a commune although under the authority of the central government, patrols his beat most vigorously during these days of migration. He not only sees that the animals keep out of the forbidden fields, but also enforces the custom that no nomad family camp in one place longer than twenty-four hours. But most field policemen are quite ready to show the nomads where they can find a camp site in the event some old one is no longer available, for these guards expect a tip — a box of cigarettes or "whatever one has the pleasure to give," as Berates put it.

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These nomads apparently feel that many of the keep-off signs are put up out of spite, thus bringing to light the distrust between the peasant and the nomad. I had read a most unfavorable characterization of the Vlach, which discussed the peasant's hostility to the nomad, in *Home Life in Hellas* by Z. Duckett Ferriman. Writing in 1910, he said:

> The Vlach ignores the law and defies it. His presence in the vicinity of civilization is marked by rapine. He will steal the flocks of the peasant when he can, and will pasture his own flocks on their growing crops. He is a nuisance to the neighborhood he visits, and the peasantry are heartily glad when he takes his departure in spring to share the mountain with the wild boar and the eagle. Devastation marks his progress. . . .[13]

In 1953 I gained no such picture of the nomad, nor did any of the Greek officials or peasants with whom I talked try to give the nomad such a bad reputation. Their major concern in the border area was more with the political reliability of the nomad, particularly the Karagouni. Perhaps it was some of the age-old distrust coming to the fore, but seldom did the Greek soldiers in World War II place much confidence in these wandering shepherds. Because of this, I was not surprised to learn from Berates and his men that they felt that the government was bent on destroying their way of life and forcing them into other occupations. At least three rather high officials in Northern Greece confirmed this point of view, but insisted that the policies were ultimately in the nomads' interest.

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The whole problem was neatly summarized by Michael Adler, a field representative of the American Mission to Greece, who has had a long and distinguished period of service both in Epirus and Macedonia. He pointed out that what we were witnessing was an attempt to bring conditions of four hundred years ago up to date. Since under Turkish rule large areas of land were rented to these wandering shepherds, the tax collector knew where to find them as they came and went on their migrations. Upon liberation in the nineteenth century, the Greeks settled on the land and started developing their own flocks; competition became very keen and the nomads began to get the worst of it. With the coming of the flood of refugees from Asia Minor in the twenties, much land formerly used for grazing was turned into cropland. More recently the border areas, particularly those in Macedonia, which formerly supported thousands of animals, have been closed, with the result that the nomadic people are more and more being forced into a pocket toward the plain, where they are naturally not particularly welcome. Adler had found the nomadic peoples intelligent and fully aware of the situation, and he felt that most of them, particularly the young men, were seeking permanent settlement as fast as this could be arranged. In any event, the gaining of citizens' rights means for the erstwhile nomads that they can no longer be misused by those who don't want them. In other

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words, while their problems are growing, they are now gaining the constitutional means of handling them. They may feel oppressed economically, but they are not politically oppressed.

When I asked Berates if he wanted to settle down, he said that it was all right for the small livestock owners, but that it was impossible for a large owner like himself with eight hundred sheep. He would keep on trying to make a go of it as he had done in the past. When asked how he would feel if he did not have to move up to the mountains, his immediate reply was, "I would get sick," and all of the other men nodded their heads affirmatively. "I even have to go to the same spot, not just anywhere up the mountains. And the sheep need the change, too. They got sick during the war when they were not able to make the change."

The Disappearing Tselingata

One of the interesting types of cooperative organization which I hoped to find in Epirus was that of the *tselingata*. I had heard that, just as the agricultural peasants have their village community, so the shepherds in the past grouped themselves under a chief shepherd who directed their activities and also represented the whole group before the outside world. I had also been told that this form of association was found among the nomadic groups but that it was not necessarily identified solely with them.

A clear account of this primitive but practical shepherds' cooperative is contained in a helpful book by K. Koukkides entitled *The Spirit of Cooperation of Modern Greece and of Ambelakia, the First Cooperative of the World*.[18] In this arrangement each sheep and goat owner contributes his flock as capital and his labor. This union is usually governed by the eldest shepherd, who is called *architselingas* (chief shepherd), and who looks after the organization of the union, rents the pasture land, allots land to each according to the quality of land and to the different categories of animals to be grazed, specifies the work that each member will do, and makes payment for all of the necessary common expenses. In addition, he obtains credit to cover the living expenses of each member and the member's family, regulates the amount paid to each shepherd, pays taxes and any field damage done, and acts as the banker and the "grocer" of the union. At the end of each period he subtracts all these expenses from the general income or fund which has accumulated from the sale of the milk, wool, sheep, and cheese, gives back to his colleagues whatever is due each according to the flock he has brought into the union and according to the personal work he has done, such as pasturing, transporting milk to the cheese plant, milking, making cheese and other dairy products, and taking the goods to the market.

The quantity of milk is estimated according to the number of animals each shepherd has, so that if animal diseases occur in the merged flock the loss will be shared by everybody. An important part of the net profit is

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[The Tselingata]

used for public works, especially for the operation of schools. All these accounts are regulated by the general assembly of the members of the union.

In my conversations with Berates, the visit to whom has just been described, I learned that he considered himself an architselingas. True enough, he owned most of the sheep, but he did allow the six men who worked for him to have flocks of their own, say fifty to sixty head, if they could get a start. One of his shepherds was assigned the task of keeping the records of milk production so that each one could have a share prorated on the basis of the number of animals in the common flock. Every six months Berates draws up a contract with those associated with him; he supervises the cheese production up in the highland pastures and even helps process the milk for some of the smaller owners who are not in position to set up their own plant.

Those who knew Epirus a generation or so ago tell of the great authority these chief shepherds had, each ruling in autocratic fashion his people and the area in which they were established. Should one of the shepherds associated with any of these chieftains become dissatisfied and want to move away, he found it impossible to attach himself to any other chief shepherd, for these men of position stuck together. In the days of turmoil and disorder early in this century, it was almost necessary for a small owner to be connected in some way with a leading figure who could protect him and represent him to outside authorities.[14]

The tselingata, from many accounts, were not necessarily based on kinship, though there were interesting examples of the group of relatives being so large that they formed a union by themselves. In such a case, age and generation would usually determine who had the authority and his word would carry great weight among the others.

Even today there are powerful chief shepherds. The mayor of the city of Egoumenitsa, along the Ionian Sea, was the head of the Petoules family which is run on the principles of the traditional tselingata. There are eighty members in the family and all of them obey him. In 1953 I was told that the Petoules family collectively owned from 12,000 to 14,000 sheep, in spite of the fact that on one day in 1948 the Communist guerrillas took 4,200 sheep from them. Although they owned sufficient land to graze at least 14,000 sheep, they were improving the pastures by sowing wild clover. The summer area alone added up to about 3,450 acres and the winter area was additional.

One official in describing this family said that in 1952 some of the governmental representatives in Ioannina were ordered by the central government to go to the head of the Petoules family and take some of the pasture land for the settlement of refugees who needed land. They expected trouble but were pleasantly surprised when the architselingas agreed to give the land and also went with them to select it. Two villages were constructed,

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but these did not hamper the family's activities at all — "Just like a flea on an elephant," as one of my informants put it.

Originally, late in the nineteenth century, when the family began to rise to prominence, there were four brothers. The second brother became the head, "because he had the most brains," it was said. Upon his death the eldest became head. When the eldest died, the third in line took over until he was killed by the Italians in 1940. Since that time the fourth brother has been chief. Now the family is said to be so numerous that it has run out of names and so has called the most recent arrival "Petoules Petoules." The chief's consent is necessary for the marriage arrangements for everyone in the family and also for all of the hired shepherds employed by it. The family still sticks solely to livestock production but is building huge refrigerators for the cheese awaiting sale and delivery.

The Petoules family is now the exception rather than the rule. For many years to come the tselingata will exist in modified form, but more and more the central government will become a substitute for the arbitrary rule of the chief shepherd.[18] Where some old patriarch still holds sway, his grandsons coming back from a tour of duty in the army will plague him with their new ideas, and many will, as many are already doing, refuse to go off on lonely vigils with their flocks. Today hired shepherds are hard to find and the army experience is mentioned over and over again as the cause of the shift to other occupations. Young men with vision, seeing that the future lies elsewhere, are planning accordingly.

Stress and Strain

The changing life of the shepherd is seen not only in the movement of his flocks from one pasture to another and in his adjustment to the solitude of days away from home; many facets of his life also are revealed in the study of his village, as our visit to Valtetsi showed. The real stress and strain between two coexistent ways of life — pastoralism and agriculture — are felt in personal community relationships even more than in the impersonal contacts between peasants and shepherds on the highway.

Greek villages, of course, run the gamut from those where every family is primarily pastoral to those where the only sheep or goats kept are the two or three around the house for a small family milk supply. In between are those with a mixed economy.[19] Two villages of this type, both of which happen to be in Roumele, illustrate the kind of conflict that springs up between farmers and livestock owners, a conflict reminiscent of our earlier American West with the hostility between the open-range cattlemen and the sodbusters who put up barbed-wire fences.

In the first village, near Mesolongi, the farmers complain that they have no security in their fields because the livestock owners have the major power and influence and they follow the old tradition of allowing the flocks

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to graze all over the community area as soon as the harvest is in. If the farmers leave any grain in the fields after harvesting, the sheep seem to think it part of their daily ration and tackle it with delight. The farmers have little recourse, since the sheep owners are elected as community councilmen and officers of the cooperative and are always in a position to defend their interests.

Much the same situation prevails in a village near Agrinion where over seven thousand sheep and over one thousand goats are kept. Recently, some of what was formerly pasture land has been distributed to those without land, through a cooperative association newly formed for that purpose, thus restricting the amount of grazing area. These new owners, as well as others without livestock, resent the invasion of their fields by the flocks immediately after harvest. Little control can be exercised unless shepherds so desire, for none of the parcels are fenced off and it is customary to let the animals roam at will when crops are in.

The nomarch of Serrai stated that in his area of Macedonia it was very common for the whole community to rise up in protest against the pasturing of the flocks by shepherds on land belonging to the community. The shepherds insist that they will continue to use these lands; so the villagers come to the nomarch and ask whether or not they must let those so-and-sos graze sheep on their land. The nomarch assures them that they are within their rights to keep the shepherds off, and they leave the office with a determined look, as though no number of shepherds could budge them from their resolve. When these local leaders get back home, some shepherd comes up to them and says: "My sheep will die, my family will die if you don't let me use that land." The people then change their minds and give the shepherd permission to graze his flocks there. Later on, when they see the nomarch and he asks them what happened, they say: "Poor man, we couldn't let him starve, so we let the sheep graze there." But such disputes do not always end so amicably.

Another source of conflict is the lowly goat. The parties to the conflict are not peasants arguing it out with one another, but rather the forest service trying to forbid the peasants from keeping goats. During the dictatorship of General Metaxas (1936–1941), a law was passed and enforced which forbade the peasants from keeping goats. The justification for this measure is that goats, a browsing animal, do much more damage to the forests than do sheep, a grazing animal. In the case of a pastoral village in Western Macedonia, not far from Kastoria, the prewar number of eight thousand sheep and goats shrank during the conflict because of requisition by the guerrillas, army of occupation, and such, to seven hundred and fifty. In order to rebuild livestock numbers quickly as a means of eking out a living, the people got together flocks of goats. The Agricultural Office has supported them in this, while the Forestry Office opposes the idea. The

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233 578 peasants argued to the foresters: "Ten communities in this area formerly made their living from goats and prospered; we know of no village which has made its living solely off forest products. We prefer the goats."

785 654 Then, as though to clinch their arguments, they pointed out that they must stable their goats for only forty days during a year, but their sheep, which cannot browse, need to be stabled and fed at home for one hundred and fifty days a year. To the peasants this is obviously an advantage; to the forestry program it is just as obviously a menace. The result: impasse.

The same question is being raised all over the country in villages as far apart as some on the Bulgarian border in Central Macedonia and others around Amphissa in Roumele. From the standpoint of these villagers the goat is the answer, but the central government seems to be backing the Forestry Office. Some commentators on the issue point out that the peasant's practice of setting fires to burn over land or accidentally starting fires through carelessness is perhaps as big an enemy to trees as the goat. It will be interesting a generation from now to see who has won out in these isolated mountainous outposts of Greece. (My bet is on the goat.)

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233 178 A final contrast will reveal the complexity of small-livestock production in a country as regionally diverse as Greece. Many villages could be cited which twenty-five years ago possessed twenty thousand sheep or more. With the passing of the years, the numbers declined because of the gradual shrinkage of available pasture area. While sheep are still raised in these communities today, they are being further reduced and turned into "home flocks" fed in or near the village throughout the year. But a reverse process has also been in motion since 1950. In tobacco villages around Xanthe, in Thrace, sheep raising is being pushed by the agricultural authorities and loans are being extended by the Agricultural Bank — all to serve the double purpose of giving the depressed tobacco farmer some supplementary income and also to take advantage of unutilized pasture land in that part of the country.

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This illustrates the fact that sheep (and goats) still are the best and at times the only sound economic adjustment to some of the terrain areas of Greece; almost everywhere they are good supplementary means of adjustment. There will probably be a stepped-up trend toward pasture improvement, which means that pastures — particularly those on the plains — can be made to carry more animals per acre. The day may come when the sheep will be driven in large trucks up to their summer pastures, thus avoiding the days of grazing along the roads of migration, or in many of the agricultural areas dairy cattle may replace sheep as producers of milk. But these developments are still in the future.

Symbolic of what seems to be in store for many shepherds was the quiet, middle-aged man we met in front of a coffeehouse in the refugee village of Menidi, between Agrinion and Arta in Roumele. There along the sea he

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seemed sadly out of place in his mountain dweller's lambskin kalpaki (brimless hat) and his shepherd's staff, sitting under a tree and looking out at the fishing boats.

"Do you have sheep?" we wanted to know, both curious and surprised to see him there.

"No."

"Then why are you wearing the kalpaki and carrying the shepherd's crook?"

"I've lost so much that I like to carry my crook just to have the illusion that I still have my sheep."

Some of the younger men in the group, separated by war from their mountains and their sheep, were full of talk and plans of farming. When we asked them if they had thought of fishing here by the sea, both young and old looked incredulous, even contemptuous. "We are shepherds," they said proudly. "We do not know the sea." Having lost the mountains, the younger men were willing to try the plain, but the older ones could not. The concept of occupational displacement took visible form in this fifty-year-old shepherd sitting idly and hopelessly under a tree, looking at the sea which he did not know and the plain which he could not understand, his big brown hands clasping the symbol of his lost world, the shepherd's crook.

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Before

Easter the wife whitewashes the house, the wall around the yard, and the oven, even pressing her husband into service should this be necessary. She strings tobacco leaves in late summer; she also strings peppers and onions to hang under the eastern eaves or on the door post. After the shearing is done in the spring, she is anxious to get the wool washed and hung up to dry in festoons around the yard; she dries beans on a blanket out in the yard or, if she lives in Southern Greece or the islands, uses the cement cover of the cistern for the beans as well as for drying figs and almonds.

The so-called home or house animals — one or two sheep or goats, which are often petted, and the donkey — are under her supervision much of the time, although the man on his way to the fields may take the smaller animals with him and stake them out to graze. The women also have full responsibility for poultry except around Attica, where commercialized poultry raising also absorbs the attention of the men. Caring for the swine and a family cow, should there be one, is a woman's job. But the men will assume responsibility for a herd of cows, a flock of sheep, the oxen, or any horses. When new homes are built, special stables for these animals are provided in the yard. The women are busy, as would be rural women anywhere, when a pig is slaughtered. As a matter of fact, every member of the family usually participates in some stage of the proceedings, looking upon it as a gala occasion, more fun than work.

Although gardening is looked upon as woman's work, the man usually prepares the soil and leaves the planting and cultivation up to the woman. Nor is he apt to help when his daughter goes out with a neighbor woman to gather acorns for the pigs, even though it means that one of the women has to spend most of the afternoon up in the trees shaking down the acorns to the woman below.

Woman's participation in field work is gradually changing throughout much of Greece. In Polygyros, the chief city in the Chalkidike Peninsula, the men proudly point out — as they do in Crete — that women do not work in the fields. More and more the men are taking over the field work and the cutting of wood, in which they formerly expected the women to help. One still will see many women out in the fields chopping cotton or planting rice, with a man — apparently directing them — sitting down in the shade. As the Bishop of Messenia pointed out, many of the women working in the field are widows, or their husbands are away at work, at the market, or perhaps sick. He thought that the Greek women working their own land were better off than American women employed in factories, although the Bishop did not know that one third of the Greek labor force insured under sickness and pension plans (which means paid employees covered by government regulation) was made up of women.[12] At harvest time, too, the women wield their sickles day in and day out in areas where the mechanical harvesters

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gain, for the proverbs say: "agreement is law"; "one ties the oxen by the horns, the man by his word." But the rugged individualists can also quote proverbs to show the dangers of depending upon others: "better a threshing floor small but your own"; "the donkey owned in common is eaten by the dogs"; "the wolf has a thick neck because he has to work alone."

Perhaps the simplest form of mutual aid is found in the case of two farmers, each of whom possesses but a single animal. They take turns using both animals to pull a plow or to do some other task where a team is needed. These partners are often called *smichtes* or *sebroi*. The Yannes described in an earlier chapter, who was disconsolately waiting for his partner to finish with his horse so that he could take the team to his own fields, was engaged in this kind of mutual aid. In Epirus, for instance, those with a single animal are called *monovodoi* (or single-oxen farmers), and each tries to join up with someone else in order to have a team available when needed. Similarly, someone with a donkey or two lends his animals to another farmer who needs to haul his cereal or hay from the fields or to market, in the expectation that he will have the use of the borrower's animals when in similar need.

Somewhat more complex in detail but similar in type are the arrangements that shepherds make concerning the care of their flocks and the distribution of the produce, which was mentioned earlier in the description of the changing life of the shepherd.

Mutual aid also extends to the exchange of agricultural labor, as in the case of the potato diggers. It can also occur between two families who throughout the work season combine their labor resources, culminating in tremendous output at harvest time. Or labor can be repaid by some other kind of service, as was the case in Malakassa (Attica), where the president of the commune went to the coffeehouse and said that he needed some help in harvesting a crop. Sixteen men from the coffeehouse went along to aid. When we asked the coffeehouse proprietor what these men would receive in return we were told, "The president has a cart and will help each of these men haul in stuff from their fields when they need him."

But there are times when much help is needed for some special event which does not recur frequently in the life of an individual family. Here the traditional "working bee" is assembled. For example, a family decides to plant a new vineyard or to put up some kind of a building. It calls upon its neighbors and relatives for help, feeds them well, and eventually pays back the labor provided when called upon by those who contributed. We found mutual-aid groups also busy making cheese for their own use and for sale or digging clay which they worked into home-made brick.

Women, however, seem to be more fully involved in a wide variety of mutual-aid arrangements. They may help each other with certain household chores — carding wool, baking bread, carrying fuel (*pournari*

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Kalivi, Attica

were fed to the threshing machine by the girls, who were wearing goggles and what seemed to be gas masks to protect them from the dust. The women also were wiring the bales of straw which were taken away to be stacked. The president of the community told me:

> Anyone who wants to work signs up. Every fifteen days we put on a new crew so that quite a few people are employed and paid. We do have to keep a small permanent crew on the job throughout the threshing season, which lasts about sixty days, but almost every family has a chance to get some benefit. We only do the wheat belonging to the people of our community. We determine by lot the order in which a family's wheat is to be threshed. All the people bring their grain here, for we can thresh it much more cheaply than they could do it with animals.

We then went into the large olive-pressing plant, built in 1948, with a loan of about $30,000 from the Agricultural Bank, and learned how this part of the cooperative's business was conducted. We learned that each family's batch of olives, like its wheat, was processed separately and that it gave 8 percent of the oil to the cooperative, which is a standard amount taken by presses over Greece, plus an extra 3 percent contribution until the machinery is paid for. After that, it will have to pay only 4 instead of the customary 8 percent. When I noticed an icon in the pressing plant, the manager said that they asked the priest in to bless their work at the beginning of the season. Another man in the company remarked, "we like our religion, but we don't like our priests," a comment with which the others seemed to agree.

The more I learned about this cooperative in Kalivi, the more I realized what a shrewd investment the pasture land had been. The cooperative accumulates no money for itself but reinvests all profits into public works or special funds as determined by the directors of the cooperative. For example, a doctor is paid out of a cooperative philanthropic fund in return for looking after the poor of the community free of charge.

In addition to this general cooperative, to which all family heads belong, there are in Kalivi five other cooperatives. First, there is the credit cooperative explained to me as follows: "Since many people here have to depend upon the Agricultural Bank for loans, the credit cooperative gets the money for them and they do not have to make the contact themselves. If a local peasant wants sulphur or insecticides, the cooperative gets all that is needed. The individual then owes the cost to the cooperative. He pays no membership dues. Both men and women belong." It so happened that the president and the secretary of the community, plus three other people, made up the five-man executive committee of this credit cooperative.

Second, there is a livestock cooperative which the owners of the five thousand sheep in the community support. The members number forty,

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Kalivi, Attica

474 the executive committee five, and the supervising board three. This cooperative helps bring in fodder, sell milk, arrange loans. If a member has taken a loan, he must give milk to the cooperative as payment on the loan. In some types of loan the shepherd can be responsible directly to the Agricultura Bank. There are three other cooperatives of lesser importance. Everybody belongs to the vineyard cooperative, for all grow grapes, but this cooperative has not been very active of late due to a number of economic changes taking place in the village. Fifteen people belong to an apiary cooperative; and fifteen others belong to a poultry cooperative, since this is a growing source of income for the local people.

These reactions to cooperatives document some of the general observations made earlier about the movement. There is a tendency for the foreigner to side with those peasants who are most critical of the way cooperatives are now being run, but any such critic must be prepared to explain how one can expect much local control unless the local villagers put up some of the working capital, as did the villagers of Kalivi with their pasture land. For the most part, members of the Greek cooperatives make no contributions, buy no shares, pay only nominal membership fees, for the reason that they do not have sufficient economic margin. Those officials who lend public funds have to concentrate on control and collection, since it is an accepted practice in Greece, as in many parts of the world, for the farmer to borrow as much as he can and pay back as little as he can. The educational task, then, is the difficult one of teaching the necessity of honoring one's contracts to the cooperative as truly as the peasant honors his informal agreements to pay back labor in a traditional mutual-aid activity. It also calls for the community-wide recognition that peasants who are defaulting on their payments are hurting fellow members in the cooperative and should in time be made to feel the censure of those who are keeping agreements. But, most important of all, the cooperatives could be interpreted as social mechanisms through which the peasants can do more than merely borrow money or get fertilizer on credit — as avenues through which they can effectively increase their general economic well-being.

476 In the final analysis, however, mutual aid in a Greek village consists of more than the informal patterns, such as the potato-digging group of Neochori; it is more than the cooperative organizations in all of their variations. It also includes the philanthropic assistance, to be discussed in connection with religion, and the "voluntary labor" required of the community members by their community council, an interesing form of mutual effort to be discussed under local government.

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

178 Closely related to a family head's economic predicament is the demand
241 for, and therefore the price of, the cash crops that he grows. The tobacco
594 farmer of Northern Greece, the peasant growing olives on Mount Pelion
[435] near Thessaly, the apple grower in western Macedonia around Phlorina, and the producer of currents in the northern Peloponnesos are familiar with the ups and downs of the world markets. When he shifts from wheat to cotton or rice, the farmer makes more than an economic decision; he also determines much about family relationships in his home. Growing wheat calls for a very different participation of the woman than does the cultivation of rice in irrigated fields. In the latter case, the farmer also has to submit himself
[312] to the organizational control that the use of irrigated water necessitates,
[476] being ready to divert the stream into his own fields when his neighbor has used the allotted time for watering his fields. With his neighbors, too, he must cooperate to keep drainage ditches clear, unless this can be turned over to some governmental agency. Or, if a family shifts from sheep rais-
[233] ing to settled farming, the fate of the children is apt to be different. In caring
[857] for sheep the children are an important economic asset, which keeps them away from the house for several hours during the day and even away from school for two or three years.

178 Social change of the drifting, unplanned sort can be observed among the
626 young people as well. On a Sunday afternoon a young man recently re-
183 turned from the army may go up to a young woman in the promenade on the village square and ask if he can walk with her. This may be the first time that any young man has made this maneuver in this village. The other young people watch with almost unbelieving eyes and, if they see that no serious social consequences are visited upon the innovator, may eventually themselves get around to pairing off. Village opinion, too, may be in for a start when a father and his grown son, perhaps because they want to continue the discussion of some economic transaction in which they are involved, go to sit together in a coffeehouse where it has never been customary before for sons to sit with their fathers. Indeed, as pointed out earlier, the practice may be that sons are not even to enter the coffeehouse where the fathers go. Now and then, particularly in the past, innovators of this sort have experienced unpleasant social pressures of many kinds, which may even have stopped them from trying to change local customs. Today, there is such social ferment, such a mixing of traditional and modern roles, that much more individual variability is permitted.

178 Several times I asked Greek friends who were familiar with village life
369 whether the villager was more apt to imitate what he saw in Athens or what
602 he saw in a provincial town. In other words, I wondered if the changes emanating from the city were mediated by the townspeople who lived nearer the villager and in whose community the villager felt more at home. These

2:Friedl E-5 (1955-1959) 1963 EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

equipment and produce on their animals or, as two families do, on tractors. 621
They are joined by farmers from neighboring villages whose fields lie adjacent 484
to Vasilika and who travel through the village to reach them. Trucks come to 494
pick up cotton, tobacco, wheat for the mill, and the like and, therefore, are seen
more frequently whenever the various crops are being harvested. In any case, 512
whenever there is movement along the entire length of the settlement, it occurs
most densely in the early morning just after dawn and in the early evening just
before sundown. As the labor of the day starts, in addition to the other traffic, 233
someone from each of the households in which sheep and goats are owned leads 484
the animals up the hill to the shepherds who will watch over them during the
day. In the evening, the sheep are brought back again, but the goats often find 512
their way home without any help. A first encounter with a lone goat coming 621
around the corner of a village house, as it suddenly appears in the violet light
of early dusk, is a startling experience. The soft light at the beginning and the
end of these days is associated with the delicate tinkle of the sheep and goat
bells as the animals move around the village. The entire ebb and flow of move-
ment diminishes to an irregular trickle during the Mediterranean winter months
from November to January when people stay in the village proper for most of
the day.

Vasilika's shepherds and their families also participate in the main pat-
terns of movement, except that the shepherds continue to go out daily through
the winter and may leave the village entirely for the summer months.

But traffic in Vasilika is rarely a mass movement. Rather, there is always 484
a range of time within which the villagers consider it feasible to carry out any 512
activity. Each family moves at its own pace within the range. Even during the 241
busy agricultural seasons, watching from the vantage point of a terrace facing a 805
part of the main street at the east side of the *aghora*, one sees, first, a man going
by in the direction of the river, leading a horse which carries a cultivator in its
saddle; for ten minutes no one goes by, then a young man passes in the same
direction; for five minutes nothing, then a woman and her grown daughter go
past in the other direction carrying hoes for work in the cotton fields. A few [492]
minutes later, two young brothers go by, one leading and the other riding a
horse sidesaddle; and so it goes until there is a longer period with virtually no
movement at all. What is more, each day, even in the same season, the people
involved in the movement will vary. The man who was first to go out one morn-
ing may leave a half-hour later the next; a girl who did the washing at home
one day, and so did not appear at all, will be seen going out to the fields on the
following morning. Such variation in activities both as regards the time when [221]
each of the village families starts on any project, and also with respect to the
timing of activities from day to day by the members of any one household, ap-
pears again in the seasonal shifts of activities. The first major agricultural task 245
in early spring is the pruning of the grape vines. For a period of several weeks 221
almost every man who passes by is carrying a pruning hook. But here too, fami-
lies start and end their pruning on different days. Only the comments on the
situation are uniform. Each man complains of his blistered hands and aching

2: Friedl E-5 (1955-1959) 463 EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

help in the care of fruit trees that the provincial government had arranged to plant on the highway near the village.

The farmers are willing to try some variations if they can use the techniques they know and understand. Cotton prices had been low in 1958. In 1959, therefore, about four or five of Vasilika's farmers planted some of their cotton lands as melon patches, intending to sell the produce in Levadhia or in Athens. By 1961, they had gone back to raising cotton, because the experiment had failed. One of Vasilika's farmers prefers to use his irrigated land as a truck farm, and he and his son sell the produce in the surrounding villages. He argues that with a vegetable crop the cash returns are faster and he incurs fewer debts.

Livestock

Each of the farm-owning households also maintains some animals. One or two horses, a mule or a donkey, some five to twenty sheep, and one or two goats constitute the range of livestock ownership for each household. The horses, as we have seen, pull the plow and the cultivators in the fields. Together with the mules and donkeys, they also serve as pack animals. The pack saddle of wood and leather is of a design that has remained virtually unchanged from Homeric times. It is used not only for carrying loads, but also for carrying people who ride sidesaddle among the paths, through the fields, and between the villages. Sidesaddle is the normal riding position for both men and women, but in the spring, when the horses are let out to pasture on the hillside, the young men of the village sometimes ride them home bareback, astride, galloping and whooping in what they call *kaouboi* fashion.

The villagers do not give their animals individual names, and they take no particular care to keep them physically comfortable. They will hitch them in the shade of a tree in the fields if that is possible, but the farmers may not remove the saddles for an entire day. The animals are beaten with switches and kicked to make them work, and children are permitted to tease donkeys. Nevertheless, the villagers occasionally pat one of their beasts and sometimes encourage children to kiss the ears of a horse and to feed it a lump of sugar.

Sheep, except for the lambs, are cared for by the shepherds. Of a hardy mountain breed capable of surviving the rigors of Greek pasturage and climate, the sheep as milk and wool producers augment the food supply and sometimes the cash of the farmers. Sheep milk is rarely drunk in liquid form, but yoghurt and cheese are prepared from it. The white cheese is a staple of the villagers' diet. They eat yoghurt less frequently and prepare it only as a special dish in milk season.

The villagers raise a special lamb each year to slaughter at Easter, but otherwise rarely eat lamb or mutton. They will consume a sheep that dies of age or disease, and they slaughter sheep for some special occasion such as a wedding, or someone's name day. At shearing time, wool is boiled in large kettles, washed in the river, sent to town for carding, and then dyed and spun into thread at home by the women.

2:Friedl E-5 (1955-1959)1963 EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

into thread at home by the women. In each household the women weave the rugs that are a necessary part of a girl's trousseau with wool from their own sheep—at least as long as it lasts.

Goats are raised for their meat and, in households with young children, for their milk. Adults rarely drink the liquid milk. As a form of pasteurization, the villagers always bring the milk to a boil before serving it, and the children drink the milk while it is still warm. In the more prosperous households, the women use both sheep's and goat's milk as an ingredient for a kind of milk and egg custard pie and for a sweet milk and rice dish served with sugar and cinnamon. But these foods are in a class of special treats and are served mostly in spring and early summer when the milk supply is at its height. Goat meat, however, is often a less elegant substitute for lamb on special occasions. Kids are raised for the Christmas feast, and the measure of the success of a household's participation in the village's *paniyiri* (patron saints' day festival) is expressed by the number of animals (goats and sheep) slaughtered for the feast. The more visitors to the house, the more enjoyable the day is felt to be; the more visitors, of course, the more meat is eaten. When asked whether the *paniyiri* had been successful this year, one farmer answered, "Oh yes; we slaughtered three!"

Chickens are also an additional source of food and sometimes of income for the villagers. Families keep about a dozen fowl. They roam the house yards, (there is an effort made to keep them off the village street, and all hands join in shooing them out of the houses), and roost at night in the stone stables or in the ground-floor storeroom of the houses. The villagers like eggs, and eat them in various ways, but their production is also, of course, seasonal. The chicken is most significant for the part it plays in Greek village hospitality. The villagers will say, "Come to our house for a proper meal (*trapezi*). We'll kill a chicken for you." And that is quite literally what they do. Occasionally enough chicks survive to create a surplus from the household's point of view. Such poultry is sold to buyers who come around from the nearby towns. Chickens are rarely considered an extra source of food for ordinary household consumption.

A watchdog is a common addition to a household's collection of farm animals. The people of Vasilika believe that thievery is a constant danger to be guarded against and prefer, if possible, not to leave their household compounds totally unguarded. Whenever possible, some member of the household stays around the property even if it means sacrificing a visit to a feast at a neighboring village. If all the members of a household are out working in the fields, a dog is left at home. Ordinarily, however, dogs are tied up all day and the farmer, just before he goes to sleep, frees the dog to stand vigil through the night. Dogs are trained to bark at any unusual noise or at the approach of any person who is not a member of the household. The villagers, especially the women, are very much afraid of the dogs and consequently avoid going out at night. On one occasion, when the women and girls of the village had sat together in the church until long after dark, they set out for home with groups of neighbors clustered together, holding on to each other, walking fast, and shuddering and exclaiming with fear at the clamor made by the dogs. It should be added that in actuality, there are few thieves in the village and that the dogs rarely bite anyone.

2: Friedl E-5 (1955-1959) 983 EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

Specialization of Labor

233 563 166 463 434 Sheepherding as a specialty is relatively new to the village. Eight of Vasilika's ten shepherds and the members of their households are called *Vlachi* by the villagers. Most of these people come from Agrafa, in Euritania, in the northwestern part of the Greek mainland. Their fathers and grandfathers were shepherds, and the present group in Vasilika is the first generation ever to have settled anywhere with the intention and reasonable hope of staying. They augment the income from their own flocks by caring for those of the farmers as well.

233 563 511 434 464 262 342 From the point of view of the *Vlach* shepherd households headed by men (two are headed by widows), the settlement in Vasilika is a satisfactory change in their circumstances. In the years between 1950 and 1956, they had succeeded in building up their own flocks to the point where the sale of sheep, milk, and wool enabled them to have a small cash income to add to the money their women earned as hired agricultural labor. With a cash income, their diet no longer needed to be restricted largely to bread and cheese. The houses of the shepherds have improved since 1956. By 1961, all the shepherds' families were in houses instead of reed huts, and two of them were living in their own newly built one-room brick houses.

233 563 621 555 871 641 435 Perhaps most important to the shepherds' sense of well-being is that they have been admitted to citizenship in the *kinotis* of Vasilika, and that their children are receiving an education. The adult men had had to teach themselves and their children just enough reading and writing to be able to keep track of their commercial transactions through the year. Indeed, one shepherd, when asked what he thought about when he was out alone with his sheep, replied that he spent most of the time calculating how many sheep and how much milk to sell under the different possible price conditions of the coming season. What pleases the shepherds in Vasilika is that their children will have, as a result of a more formal education, some opportunities to follow a calling other than that of shepherd. In 1961, one of the shepherd's sons had already successfully completed a year at the gymnasium. Some of their daughters have married into the farm families of Vasilika, and even if these farmers are among the less prosperous in the village, such a marriage conveys prestige on the girl and her family in the eyes of the shepherd community.

233 563 571 621 Finally, the shepherds are grateful for the fact that several of them are settled in the same village and that it is possible for them sometimes to herd their flocks together. They are less lonely—they have company (*parea*)—and to have companions to talk to is considered a basic good by all the people of Vasilika.

463 445 In the first chapter, the movement of itinerant traders, vendors, artisans, and professionals into Vasilika was mentioned. The village has no resident carpenters, stonemasons, saddle-makers, barbers, tailors, or doctors; but the very existence of such specialists and the expectation that they will come from time to time, demonstrate an important characteristic of the household economy of

2: Friedl E-5 (1955-1959) EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

653 The reluctance of the villagers to work on the road seems to result not
461 from a lack of motivation but rather from a more compelling distaste for manual
491 labor, and especially for such work when it does not directly or immediately benefit each man's own family. Several years later when a new school was built, some of the parents of the school children helped with parts of the construction. The other villagers did not.

651 The preparation of the community tax rolls is an important responsibility
623 of the village council. Since taxes are based on land tenure, on produce, and on livestock ownership, the council must prepare lists of people who own land within the boundaries of the *kinotis*. The lists include for each person information on the number of *stremata* in each parcel of land he owns, on the kind of crop raised on each parcel, and on the quality of the land. Lists of the number of horses, mules, sheep, and goats owned by each villager are also compiled. Donkeys and chickens are not taxed and no listing is made of them. The tax is calculated for each item and the completed tax rolls are posted. A villager may feel that he has been unfairly treated, that, for example, the quality of his vine-
[627] yard has been overestimated or that he has fewer sheep than the number listed. In such a case he can request a revision from the council. His request is usually granted and that settles the matter. If he is not satisfied, he may ask for a hearing before a grievance committee, the members of which are proposed by the council from among the villagers. Any decision of the committee is subject to
[634] the veto of the nomarch. In Vasilika disputes over tax rolls are said not to occur,
651 and no grievance committee has been established for many years. There had
628 been a dispute with Parori in the 1930's over the boundaries of the two com-
692 munities. Since each *kinotis* receives taxes from the land within its boundaries the question of where one *kinotis* begins and the other ends is of considerable importance. The argument between the two villages was finally settled in the courts.

641 In connection with the preparation of tax rolls, the president has some
651 power over the shepherds living in the community. Anyone classified as a non-
621 resident of Vasilika must pay double the rate for pasturing his animals there. If no permission has been granted, he must pay triple the rate for residents. The
233 question of when and if the new settlers in Vasilika—the shepherds, who had
[622] been living there since 1950—would be considered residents of Vasilika, that is, full-fledged citizens of the *kinotis*, was of significance both to the village and to the shepherds. They were finally granted this privilege in 1959.

423 The actual process of preparing the tax rolls consists of a series of agree-
651 ments among the villagers, including their council members, as to what amount of property they will declare. In consequence, the tax rolls do not necessarily
[623] represent an accurate and complete accounting of property ownership in the *kinotis*. Farmers often try to hide some of their holdings and keep some of their
[583] transactions quiet. For example, in order to pay less in taxes on the value of dowries, the records may show the transfer of a smaller parcel of land to the groom than the one privately agreed on and later privately carried out. Records
[652] are probably being kept more accurately now, since credit from the Agricultural Bank is based on land holdings, and proof of ownership must be given to the bank.

5:Hammond M-5 (1948-1950)1956
EH1 Greece EH1

THE WATERS OF MARAH

795 territory. Kato Nevrokopi, where the Greek Metropolitan has his
648 throne, is a large village, or *comopolis* (it had a pre-war population of
[162] about 2,000 souls), about twelve kilometres from the frontier.[1] The
722 whole of this region was evacuated by the civilian population in
166 March, 1941, when invasion seemed imminent, most of the refugees taking shelter in Drama, some forty-five kilometres to the southward. When the Germans abandoned eastern Macedonia to the Bulgars, all who were able to do so fled to Salonica, Verroia and other towns beyond the river Strymon. It was only after the withdrawal of the Bulgars in the autumn of 1944 that the Greek population began to trickle back.
727 In 1949 no less than twelve of the thirty villages of the diocese were
[936] in ruins and uninhabited, and the number of the orphans was said to
[346] approach 900. Kato Nevrokopi itself, though it still bore traces of the great battle which had raged about the forts of the Metaxas line and their heroic defenders, had come through the years of occupation and the more recent troubles almost unscathed, save for the deliberate destruction of the metropolis and the school.

796 It had been arranged that the Metropolitan should celebrate the
[793] liturgy next morning at the village of Dasoto, four or five miles away, which would be keeping its patronal festival. The day was ushered in by bugle-calls and a great beating of drums, revealing shortly after five o'clock that the newly-formed scout troop was already abroad. These
[233] martial noises were soon mingled with the soft ringing of a multitude
[512] of bells, as the cattle were driven out through the narrow paths between the cottages to the dusty river bed where they assemble each morning before moving off to the pastures. By a little before seven it had become
[493] evident that others besides ourselves were keeping the feast at Dasoto, as a few carts drawn by oxen or buffaloes, together with some solitary riders, rattled across the bridge and headed westwards. We followed
[487] in a jeep. Our path lay through fields of maize and tall sunflowers, above which occasional glimpses of a blue and white flag of vast dimensions indicated the scouts' line of march, along tracks which a heavy shower would render impassable to anything on wheels. Dasoto
[361] came into view after a quarter of an hour; a cluster of lime-washed
[342] cottages, the church prominent amongst them, on the lower slopes of the heavily wooded heights that surround the plateau.
[793] The parish priest and some thirty or forty men and boys had come as far as the outskirts of the village to welcome us. The Bishop's vestments,

[1] [i.e. Bulgarian frontier - ANALYST]

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1
Kotta

[Hill Villages]

727 example. I even saw two fine Swiss watches on the wrists of
621 young men dressed in homespun.

[571] In the immediate postwar period, Kotta benefited somewhat
[657] from government help. The villagers were given glass to repair the windows of their houses, and some lumber for doors and window frames, so that their houses are in better repair today
[491] than in 1947. In 1954 a stout stone bridge was built across the stream with government funds, and the villagers made a rude road to connect Kotta with the outside world. Vehicles can therefore come into the village, though few come, since the villagers have little need of anything from beyond their own small valley.

[241] Their agriculture is much the same as before, with corn al-
• [233] most the sole crop. The village flock of sheep is slowly growing back to prewar proportions, thanks in part to the government's having given each family four sheep as a start. The
[492] village also has a few cattle – another government gift – which not only yield milk but are harnessed to the plows as well. All this represents a return to familiar patterns.

x 178 The only agricultural innovation that has so far come to Kotta
241 is the experimental sowing of alfalfa on one of the good acres
233 of bottom land. This measure was recommended to the village
[242] by a government extension agent in the hope of remedying one of the crying weaknesses of its traditional economy – the lack of winter fodder for animals. Leaves cut from trees and dried cornstalks have been normal winter fare for cattle and sheep; and since the village stands more than two thousand feet above sea level, the winter is both long and severe. As a result the animals emerge thin and weak from the winter months. Yet the villagers are not altogether convinced that the new crop is worth while. Alfalfa was planted for the first time in 1955, and while it did help to feed the cattle, the new crop occupied one of the best pieces of bottom land the village possesses, where

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
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Kotta
[Hill Villages]

corn for human food grows better than in almost any other spot. To replace human with animal food on such land is a considerable sacrifice – too much of a sacrifice if the population of the village should once again begin to grow.

As things are today, the villagers lead a very leisurely life. Work in the fields takes at most three months of the year. There is no need of outside work, and no one attempts to find it. For nine months of the year, consequently, the men have plenty of time on their hands. They use it in sitting around the village and talking. Their talk is easy and friendly. Men who fought on opposite sides in the guerrilla war could joke about it without any trace of bitterness. As a matter of fact, many of the survivors had fought on both sides, first with the guerrillas and then with the Greek army. Those who stayed with the guerrillas were killed, or else disappeared into Albania. Except for the loss of their children, there seems no inclination to blame the guerrillas for what happened; nor is there any perceptible hostility against the Greek government. The general feeling about the war is that it was all an absurd nightmare in which the villagers themselves were no more than victims, rather than participants. As Slavs, the villagers cannot easily share Greek nationalism, and Communist ideas and ideals seem to have left no impression upon them. Presumably, the few who took those ideas seriously departed with the retreating guerrilla army. For those who remain, the vision of Sydney or Toronto means far more than any ideological paradise.

One of the most surprising changes in Kotta is the prevalence of Greek as the normal and natural speech, for communication among the villagers themselves as well as with strangers. "We are all Greek now," one of the young men said, and explained that both in the guerrilla and in the regular army, the language and sentiment had been Greek. Only the old people of the village speak Slav any more, he said. Even more to the point, the

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1
Kotta

[Hill Villages]

regretted the loss of five of his own whom the guerrillas had taken. Yet he was fortunate in having one child still with him, a girl who was too young to leave her mother when the guerrillas took the older children. As for the attitudes of the younger generation in the village, I could not satisfy myself. In the presence of their elders, they generally kept quiet, and certainly refrained from any overt dissent. Whether they, too, shared the traditional view that the more children one has the better off one is (assured thereby of God's blessing and of sustenance in old age), I could not tell.

CHERASIA

Cherasia is a village in Thessaly near the base of Mount Pelion, some six air miles from Volos, the fourth city of Greece. Along the winding road, however, it lies about twelve miles from Volos; and before 1952 the only road connection with the village required a detour of about twenty-four miles around the mountain. The community is an old one. Local tradition holds that it was founded 680 years ago. Until the Germans destroyed the "upper" village in 1943, the community led a semi-migratory life, spending the summer months high up the mountain where a natural spring supplied water, and coming down to the foot of the mountain only in winter, when the flocks could pasture on the stubble of other villages' grain fields. The villagers looked upon the upper village as their real home, the lower one as only a temporary shelter.

The traditional occupations of the village were sheepherding and charcoal burning. Once upon a time, sixty or seventy years ago, the main support of the community may well have been sheep, pastured on the rough mountain in summer, and on grain stubble in the winter. Then, by degrees, charcoal burning and woodcutting became more important. Two factors presumably

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957

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Cherasia

[Hill Villages]

led to this change. One was the rise of Volos as an important urban center, requiring charcoal as fuel for cooking and for heating houses. To supply the rising demand, the villagers of Cherasia began cutting off the forests of Mount Pelion with a new energy. A second factor was the growth of population in Cherasia itself. As more families appeared, sheep could not support them all, because the pastures could not be readily extended. So the people fell back on exploitation of the forests.

This "ancient" history is mostly speculation. I was not able to get any clear account of their distant past from the men of the village. What they did know was that in 1905 three families had secured title to 100 stremmata (25 acres) of land apiece in the little valley that spreads out below the site of their winter quarters at the foot of the mountain. At that time, very likely, the free villagers of the mountain saw little or no attraction in the toilsome life of a farmer, and preferred to keep to their ancient shepherd's way of life, supplemented by woodcutting and charcoal burning.

About the time of the first world war, things changed. As the population continued to grow, sheep and charcoal no longer sufficed to provide a satisfactory living for the members of the community. Many of them began to clear little patches of rocky mountainside in the hope of raising a crop or two on the land. Their tenure was legally recognized by a governmental survey made in 1922, which assigned to each family title to the patches its members had cleared and cultivated in preceding years. During the interwar period the pressure to find supplementary means of livelihood through agriculture continued to mount. In 1938, village authorities parceled out 500 stremmata of what had been common pasture to private family ownership. No further property changes had occurred in the village up to 1956.

The brute fact remains, however, that fields cleared from mountain slopes are miserable agricultural land. These produce

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households owning 100 stremmata each did not find it necessary to work the land themselves. Like the absentee in Volos, they also rented their fields on a sharecropping basis to the others. The president of the village in 1956 was the head of one of these households; he had let the nail of his little finger on one hand grow in order to prove to everyone that he was exempt from manual labor. He was also the only fat man I saw in the village.

The bad feeling in Cherasia was not simply a matter of economics, however. Shepherds have had a proud tradition in Greece. Heavy manual labor is beneath them, and they have always felt themselves superior to the grubbing farmers of the plains. Moreover, a tradition of violence has always lain near the surface among shepherds. In days not so very far past, it was part of the shepherd's job to protect his flock from wolves. Even today a few wolves are said to survive in remote parts of Greece; and whenever public order breaks down, far more dangerous two-footed wolves, armed with guns, quickly appear. The transition from shepherd to bandit has always been easy. A shepherd losing his flock must almost automatically become a two-footed wolf himself, preying on other shepherds or, better yet, on the fat, stolid landlords and peasants of the plain.

In view of these traditions, one can better understand the spirit of Cherasia. Free shepherds, traditionally ready for violence, were being ground down to a status beneath that of the weaklings who in 1905 had preferred the indignity of labor to the leisure of mountain pastures; and to the people of Cherasia this seemed a clear reversal of the proper social order. They were most unwilling to accept such a reversal. They were not farmers, and did not wish to become farmers. As a result, they did not do all they might have done to make their hillside agriculture rewarding. Field labor was, for them, a regrettable necessity, not a satisfying way of life. They made no effort at

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terracing, attempted no planting of fruit trees or of vines, and in general refused to borrow any of the traditional and very effective methods of Greek Mediterranean agriculture, even though there are villages on the other side of Mount Pelion, within less than two hours' walking distance, where these methods have been in use for centuries on land intrinsically no better than that of the Cherasia hillsides. (There is one important difference, however: because Cherasia's land faces north, toward the open Thessalian plain, cold winter winds blow across it and make olive cultivation impossible. But olive cultivation is and has always been the backbone of Mediterranean hillside agriculture. This undoubtedly is the reason why settlers from over the mountain never tried to exploit Cherasia's hillsides, leaving them to shepherds for winter pasture.)

The upshot of the history and traditions of Cherasia was that even before World War II, a thoroughly revolutionary mood prevailed in the village. The poor – which is to say nearly everybody in the village except the three families – felt the need to find a scapegoat for what was happening to them. They despised but also envied the three "rich" families, and felt that it would no more than serve them right to be plundered of all they had gained. The villagers also held the government and all other persons in authority vaguely responsible for the straits in which they found themselves. They could not help casting greedy eyes upon rich villages like Lofiscos, which lies within sight of Cherasia, a scant twenty miles across the flat Thessalian plain. But unlike most Greek villagers, they did not really want agricultural land; plunder was more in line with the tradition of the community.

The Communist-led guerrilla movement of World War II therefore found unusually ready and unanimous support in Cherasia. No one was willing to tell me how many men from

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too, burned some houses, including those belonging to the three "rich" families of the community. These had fled to Volos, together with some other families from the village. The people who remained were inclined to support the guerrillas.

About two weeks after my visit in 1947, the army evacuated all the remaining inhabitants of Cherasia to Volos. There they remained in refugee quarters for two and a half years. The last guerrilla band disappeared from Mount Pelion only in 1950, some six months after the main guerrilla army in the north had retreated across the Albanian frontier. It was therefore late in 1950 before the inhabitants of Cherasia were allowed – or compelled – to return to their village.

Government authorities were, however, well aware of the difficulties that confronted the community. The returned refugees were given every help to re-establish themselves. They received, gratis, 238 sheep to serve as a nucleus for their flock, as well as materials for the reconstruction of their houses, most of which had suffered damage. Officials issued seed and implements as well. A comprehensive work relief program was set up; for about two years after their return, the men of Cherasia received wages for working on projects that directly benefited their community. In this fashion the new road over the mountain was built – shortening the way to Volos by nearly half. Similarly, new and very handsome school and church buildings were constructed; and pipes from the spring in the upper village brought fresh water into lower Cherasia for the first time. This was vital if the population was to remain in the lower village the year around, since water had previously been unavailable there in summer. Another side of the government policy was to give no help toward reconstruction of the village of upper Cherasia – perched, as it was, high on the mountain beyond the reach of roads. No doubt the authorities in this fashion hoped to tie the villagers to the accessible lower village, and

/7 cont./

makes it easy for the farmers to sell their agricultural products at fairly good prices. The road built during the first war by the Allied armies is still in use and provides good transportation facilities. The same roads may be in use today by the same soldiers. The nearest market is eight kilometers from which most of the goods are bought. Once a week there is a bazaar in this market and on Tuesday of every week another bazaar is held in the nearby village of Herson.

The old Turkish village was very different than what we find it today. It had an old mosque, a pond in the center of the village, no running water but only wells, small two room sun-dried mud brick houses, with high walls around their yards, so as to protect their women from outside looks. The surrounding area of the village, which was used for cemeteries, was covered with huge pointed blocks of stones. This is because the Turks never buried their dead in the same tomb. They believed that the dead were living in an underground world by themselves and the /8/ heavier and the larger the stone the less chance the dead had to get up. From the number of such stones one could easily tell the number of years the Turks had occupied the village. The new settled refugees have used these stones for the foundations of their new houses and the ground was plowed for cereal raising. This spot being the richest of all the land of the surrounding territory, a very small portion was given to each refugee farmer. Here the fields are 1/8 of an acre. The only cereal that can stand this rich soil without being lodged is barley, which is pastured from December to March and still gives more yield than any other field of the same size. Nothing is lost in the world. Cemeteries are the best sources of nitrogen and phosphorus.

When the Turks were living in this village they were fewer in proportion to the land and so they could raise more livestock since they had more pasture land. With the increased number of refugees the livestock pasturing was more difficult.

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/45 cont./

Sickle	2	40	
Axes	1	70	
Wagons	1	2,500	
			4,200
		Grand total	31,510

[422]
[435]
[412]

A one crop farm does not offer regular income year after year. Due to diversity of climatic conditions there are on the average 3 good years to one poor year. Because of the recent settlement of the farmers their needs are great not only for their families but also for their farms, such as tools, animals, stables, barns, better houses and payment of their loans. The poor years increase the debts of the farmer tremendously and if unable to pay them he tries to find a refuge by telling lies.

[426]
[577]

The Pattern of Land use. One of the greatest troubles that the farmer of Megali Vrisi has is in getting to and from his fields. His share of land which is composed of 45 stremas (10 1/2 acres), is divided into 7 fields. The smallest piece is 1/4 of an acre and the largest 2 acres. The government in its endeavor to give equal chance to all farmers has divided the land into /46/ 7 categories according to fertility and the distance from the village. Thus the nearest field is 1/5 of a mile and the farthest one is 4 1/2 miles. This type of division, besides consuming time to and from the fields and tiring the animals with unnecessary walking, also reduces the productiveness through poor management of the fields. Rotation is neglected since the farmers having their fields in certain section have to agree on crop plantation with their neighbors. The fencing of the individual fields is impossible and anyone can pasture any field after the crops are removed. There is a law that gives the right of pasturing the fields by anyone after the crops are removed.

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[484]

[433]

[242]
[476]

[233]

We can summarize the good and bad points for such a distribution of land.

Advantages:

1. Gives equal opportunity to each farmer to have equal share of fertile as well as of infertile land.

/48 cont./ Farm Implements. The average farmer has the following implements. 241 422 407 [412] [435]

1	Harrow	$3
1	Plow, iron	1.50
1	Wooden plow	1.00
1	Yoke	1.00
3	Hoes	0.35
2	Shovels	0.25
2	Sickles	0.35

The above are the implements which the farmer uses in his farming. Borrowing of tools and implements is extensively practiced by the farmers. [474] Some of the implements and machinery that are too expensive to be owned by one farmer are owned cooperatively such as seed cleaning machine, harrow and harvesting machines. This cooperative movement is very successful and solves some of their pressing economic problems. [326] [445] Some of the implements are made locally and all repairs are done by the local blacksmith.

/49/ Domestic Animals. The livestock problem is one which is still in its infancy. 233 All the sheep are owned by the Thracians and they are increasing them every year. The sheep is the competitor of the cow. A farmer can live without sheep but cannot do without cows, since the only source of power is the cow. [492] [578] The feeling between the sheep owners and the rest of the farmers is not very good, and may develop into a very critical conflict if steps are not taken ahead of time to prevent it. Since pasturing the fields and community pasture is free to any one, [423] the sheep take advantage of this law and get the greatest benefit in competition with the cows.

The local cows are a mixture of the scrubby Macedonian breed and so far no attempt was made to improve the livestock.

One solution discussed for solving some of the pressing problems of livestock is by taxation as follows:

1. No tax should be paid by the sheep up to 12 head.
2. 12 to 25 heads 15 cents per head.
3. 25 to 40 " 30 " " "
4. 40 to 80 " 75 " " "

/49 cont./

This will give a chance for every farmer to have few and those who have too many will be obliged to reduce them due to taxes. 233

5. Every farmer who owns a pair of oxen and two /50/ cows will not pay any tax on them.

6. Those who have 5 heads of cattle will pay 40 cents per head; 5 to 7 $1.00 per head; 10 to 15, $5 per head. Also the scale of taxing should be based not only on the number of head but on the productive capacity of each cow. The better producer will pay less tax and poorest kind of cow will pay the highest.

The above is not only a measure to prevent increase in the number of cows, but also for their improvement so that the pasture can be of the utmost use for greater returns.

The pasture is common and all the animals of the village can be pastured together. Another old law which still exists for the benefit of those who have sheep, is the right of pasturing the fields after crops are removed. The owner of the field has no right to prevent others from pasturing his field after he removes his crop. The only value it has is this that everyone tries to keep livestock so as to get full advantage of his pasture rights. 233 423

The pastures are pastured the year round and year after year they are depleted from some of the best pasture plants. The only grass that occupies a large part of the best pasture is the quack grass, the thistles and wild rasberry plants. Recently the interest of a few leading farmers was directed towards improving the pasture. Some experiments with rotation, the animals /51/ at different seasons on different sections of the pasture gave best results. Harrowing early in the spring, application of fertilizers and complete rest for 3 years were methods advised. 233 246 [137] [242]

The largest part of their farming capital is composed of animals whose feeding largely depends on the pasture. If the farmers continue depleting their pasture from the continuous pasturing the time will come when a future generation will be unable to keep animals. [241] [511] [471]